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# THE SCHOOL REVIEW

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## THE TRAINING OF SECONDARY-SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Colleges and universities are beginning to assume their responsibilities in the matter of training teachers for secondary schools. That the nature, quality, quantity, and general efficiency of the work done in the different institutions would have a wide variation is to be expected, but in the departments of education the range of variation is even greater than in other collegiate departments; this is not all due to differences inherent in these institutions, or to their varying points of view, but much of it is due to the various requirements laid down in the laws of the several states.

It seems as if the requirements should touch more closely the work that these teachers are preparing to do; for instance, the required psychology should be that of the adolescent; the school management and methods should be in terms of the needs of the secondary schools; practice should be required, and provision should be made for such practice by legislative enactment.

The recommendation of the Committee of Seventeen, "that opportunity for observation and practice teaching with secondary pupils be given," is farther from being satisfactorily administered by the colleges and universities than any other suggestion that this committee made.

There are no "short cuts," but the way may be made smoother and more pleasant than is usually the case. The difficulty is that

too many teachers do not continue to try new ways but follow the paths of first experiences because it is easier for the teacher, but this lands them in a monotonous, uninteresting routine.

The Committee of Seventeen named three plans for practice teaching that have been tried with varying degrees of success in different places: (1) the maintenance of a school of secondary grade to be used for observation and practice; (2) the use of public or private high schools so situated that they are accessible; (3) the use of schools more remotely situated, for cadet teaching, when competent supervision can be had. In such cases the diploma of the teacher is given after a year of successful service as a cadet.

As shown by Farrington, the training work in most schools of collegiate grade is nil, or at least not very effective.

It is interesting to note the movement in many quarters looking toward experimentation and solution of this problem. Several state legislatures have recently made more or less liberal appropriations for the establishment of schools of secondary grade for experimental and practice purposes of teachers in training for secondary schools.

The professional training of teachers for secondary schools as planned and administered by the School of Education of the University of Pittsburgh is as follows:

The University requires for its Bachelor's degree one hundred and ninety-two credits, including six credits for physical training. There must be taken in the course at least twenty-seven units in one subject, and eighteen units in another. A *credit* is one hour of work per week for one term, three terms to the year; a fourth term may be had during the summer.

In the course for prospective secondary teachers the academic work comprises at least three-fourths of the credits, the professional work one-fourth.

During the Freshman and Sophomore years practically all of the required work is the same as that taken by the students in the College, and this work is taken in the College in the regular college classes. During the Junior and Senior years the amount of work taken in the college diminishes and the amount in the School of Education increases. In credits this work is equal for

the last two years, but the climax of the professional work comes during the Senior year.

Educational theory takes up one-fourth of the student's time during these years. This may seem to be a large proportion, but it is believed that the subjects taken are equal to any others in the course in their *cultural* and *liberalizing value*, and to the teacher they have a *practical value* in addition.

The following subjects, with the credits given, are required: principles of education, 4 credits; psychology of education, 4 credits; child-study, 4 credits; school economy, 3 credits; history of education, 4 credits; educational classics, 6 credits; play, 3 credits; either elementary or secondary education, 4 credits.

The electives that may be had are numerous. The School of Education offers in all about sixty-five different courses. The electives in education are such as history of education; experimental pedagogy; psychology and pedagogy of study; educational sociology; school hygiene; and secondary-school problems. These may be substituted for the minor academic electives in the Senior year.

The major subject of the student is continued through the Junior and Senior years. In the Junior year, the minor subject should be related to the major subject, or should be of such a nature as will combine with it in an effective teaching group.

In the Senior year the historical and educational aspects of the major subject are given, and the special pedagogy of the subject is worked out in the practice teaching and made to function as far as possible with the student's other work.

The minor subject in the Senior year should be in a different field from that of the Junior year. Occasionally the time given to the minor this year is given to several subjects. The aim of the student is considered.

The selections and changes in all courses in the School of Education are made in consultation with the dean of that school.

The special feature of the professional work is the observation and practice, which begins in the Junior year, and this work receives one-fourth of the credits of the Junior and Senior years.

In the Junior year the students are apprenticed to near-by

secondary schools, where they serve as assistants to selected teachers of the subject that forms the student's major or minor subject in the University.

The apprentice teachers assist daily in all the duties of the school and classroom, except to give actual class instruction at the beginning. They coach backward children, keep records, make out reports, criticize written work, prepare blackboard work, conduct written lessons, assemble and set up apparatus and illustrative material, act as laboratory assistants, look after the ventilation, heating, and lighting of the classroom: in fact they do anything that belongs to classroom management.

Another plan that is being used with much success for practice of the Junior year is to have the Juniors teach regularly from one to three periods in seventh- or eighth-grade classes. These grades should be included with those of the high school, as the problems are similar, but the subject-matter is not so difficult as it is later.

Another form of practice that the University of Pittsburgh is using for the Junior year is to have the students act as substitute teachers in graded schools during the illness of the regular teachers, or when the regular teachers are visiting other schools.

This work gives the students confidence and classroom freedom by making them familiar with the details of administration and class routine, and enables them to do these necessary things when they get to teaching with little effort; while with most young teachers the problems of class administration overshadow the instruction, or the reverse is the case, and it is difficult for them to secure a proper adjustment between these factors. It is planned that this adjustment be secured during the Junior year.

The work is also made an excellent practical course in child-study.

The observers go to their work each week with definite problems in mind that have been given to them, and they make weekly reports upon the work that they observe and the work that they do. A supervisor from the School of Education follows closely the work that is being done in observation.

The student's reports, the student's experiences, the head-teacher's criticisms, and the supervisor's observations form the

material from which the student builds or interprets his theory for subsequent practice, and give him an experience basis that enables him to understand and appreciate in a closer way the work that is being done in his courses in education.

Conferences of all the observers are held weekly by the supervisor in charge of that work.

This work in observation, including everything, is intended to occupy about three hours of each school day through the Junior year.

When the work in observation is satisfactory under the first plan, the student may begin to do a small amount of teaching, not more than one period per day, under the close supervision of the head-teacher. It is preferred that this teaching be in the field of the major subject of the student, but it may be in his minor or in grade work.

When the time for this practice arrives the student prepares carefully the lessons to be taught; the teaching and general results of the lessons are discussed and constructive criticism is given by the supervisor before and after the work is done.

The student in his earlier experiences has learned the routine of class mechanics and now gradually develops his teaching skill by his careful, intensive preparation and presentation of his daily lesson, which is presented under close supervision.

The practice work for the Senior year takes the form of the instruction, discipline, and complete management of a grade, class, or school, for two or three periods each day through the school year. At least one-half of the teaching must be in relation to the major subject of the student.

This work is done in the public and private secondary schools that are accessible to the University by trolley or train.

The apprentice teacher is assigned to a school on application by the school. The quality of the work done, the spirit, accessibility of the school, and the preparation and ability of the students available are the determining factors in making the appointment.

These apprentice teachers are subject to the principal or local school authorities during their period of service, and co-operate

in every way as members of the regular teaching force of the school; they use the devices and apparatus of the school and follow the local customs and precedents in the administration of the work, where these in any way can affect the organization of the school. The apprentice teachers report for their work, even when the University is on vacation, if the recess periods of the two schools do not coincide.

The apprentice teachers are subject to and expect the same guidance, supervision, criticism, and regulation that the other teachers receive from the local school authorities. The head of the local school sends regular reports to the School of Education concerning the work that is being done by these apprentice teachers.

The School of Education provides for the regular inspection and supervision of these apprentice teachers; they are visited at least weekly, and, if necessary, oftener, and always at unexpected times. These apprentice teachers report in weekly conference to the supervisor the work done during the week passed, giving their ideas of the results obtained, successes and failures; these are discussed and the work for the next week is planned. At this conference each apprentice teacher submits an outline of the work for each day of the following week.

The reports of the student apprentice, the reports from the local school authorities, and the inspections of the supervisor check each other, and thus the School of Education is enabled to follow closely the work that each apprentice is doing; checking, correcting, suggesting, and helping him to acquire the power and habit of self-criticism, and finally to relate intimately theory and practice, in the general conference periods, where most of the principles of pedagogy and school administration are discussed and evaluated in terms of the personal experiences of this group of apprentice teachers. Not the least valuable feature is the fact that they learn to appreciate the problems of other departments than their own and learn how they may co-operate therewith.

The School of Education would be remiss in one of its important duties if it took into this work everyone who thought he had a call to teach. We refuse to take or keep in these courses for secondary teachers any individuals who for any sufficient reason seem to

the faculty of the School of Education to have misunderstood their call.

The School of Education feels that the secondary schools have a responsibility in the matter of the training of teachers, and also that the state should properly recognize this obligation and aid in this work by making special appropriations to those secondary schools that will enter into closer co-operative relations with institutions that are preparing secondary-school teachers; because it has been shown conclusively that the results of "practicing" upon the children are not detrimental to the children.

The School of Education, believing it desirable to enter into close and cordial co-operation with the schools of the Pittsburgh district, proposed to these schools to furnish teachers, assistants, or substitutes to the schools of the community for short periods of time. These teachers are, without exception, members of the upper classes of the University who are rounding out their professional training with practical experience; they are supplied only to those schools and to those teachers whose standards and methods command the approval of the School of Education after inspection. The only conditions imposed on schools receiving the services of such teachers or assistants are that adequate supervision and criticism be furnished and reports of the work be made to the School of Education at stated times; and in the case of those students who become regular substitutes or apprentices, that the local schools pay the cost of transportation of the apprentice, this being usually ten cents per school day.

Three kinds of assistants are thus given the schools which desire to co-operate with us:

1. Substitute teachers to take charge of a school for a short time in the absence of the regular teacher.
2. Assistant teachers who become regular apprentices to the teacher in charge of the schoolroom or department, serving certain hours daily, attending to the routine affairs of the school, and thus leaving the teacher free to devote herself intensively to the more important things.
3. Regular apprentice teachers who become responsible for the instruction in certain classes throughout the year, the program being

so adapted that these apprentice teachers can carry on the University work in connection with their teaching.

There are certain manifest advantages in the operation of this plan both to the public schools and to the School of Education.

First, to the School of Education the advantages are:

1. The opportunity to give practical experience to its graduates under natural conditions as they exist in regular schools.

2. The opportunity to become familiar with the needs and problems of the schools of the community, and to keep theory and practice in close accord.

3. The opportunity to show to the public the quality of the work of its graduates.

4. The opportunity for direct, practical aid to the schools which need assistance.

Second, to the schools of the community the advantages are even more numerous and more apparent:

1. Substitute teachers of superior qualifications may be secured in unexpected emergencies without delay.

2. *Overburdened teachers* may lighten their work by turning over the details of schoolroom management to one of our students as a regular assistant.

3. Teachers who are especially strong in one subject or department may be freed for supervision in that specialty by accepting the services of one of our teachers for a part of each day.

4. High schools with limited resources may, with but small increase of expense, add to the number of courses offered by placing certain classes in charge of our students who are specializing in the teaching of these subjects.

5. Principals may get more time for inspection and supervision by utilizing our proffered help.

6. Many of the problems of individual instruction, study-hour supervision, etc., may be solved in the same way.

7. School officers are able, in many cases, to discover first-class teachers among our candidates whom they desire to retain permanently in their schools.

8. In a more general way, the schools becoming associated

with the School of Education in this manner are in a position to profit directly by whatever of value it may introduce. This, of course, will be a mutual benefit.

9. The University of Pittsburgh gives to each school that is used for training purposes free tuition in a large range of courses in the School of Education. These scholarships are given to the members of the high-school faculty, one scholarship for each student that is in training in that high school. In this way the University returns in tuition to each school an amount equal to that paid to the students for traveling expenses, and the benefit accrues to the teaching force, and the school authorities are paying for the service of the apprentice teacher.

We make no pretense that this service is to be offered to the community without any sort of compensation. It is not a charity and is not thrust on unwilling, unresponsive, or unappreciative schools. It is of great value to the schools, and the schools are expected to render some fair and just compensation in return. This compensation is not to be asked, ordinarily, in terms of money, but in terms of sympathetic co-operation and mutual service. Our mutual task is to furnish the best teachers possible to the community; that is, to the very schools which are asked to co-operate in their training. The School of Education expects, therefore, that the teachers it furnishes to the schools will meet a sympathetic reception, and will be given a fair share of supervision, kindly criticism, and such other help as they may need. These teachers are at least as well trained in point of scholarship as a large majority of the teachers regularly in the service, and their professional qualifications are quite superior to those of most of the new recruits in the profession. They do not detract in the least from the efficiency of the schools receiving them, if they receive the same supervision and help that should be accorded other new teachers; in fact these apprentice teachers are a stimulus to the teachers in service. For example, at present large classes have been divided, part of the class being given to the apprentice teacher, the other part retained by the regular teacher, and the apprentice teachers do not suffer by a comparison of results, because of the careful preparation and the close

supervision given to them. And when the schools realize their share of the responsibility for the development of good teachers for their own children, sympathetic and helpful criticism is not lacking.

It is not claimed that this is a perfect scheme for solving the problem of furnishing practice teaching for secondary teachers in training, nor that we have it in as good running order as it will be when we have had more experience with the work, but we have no precedents to follow and we do not hesitate to try new things in this work. We invite criticism and suggestion from all interested.

It is in place to say that the plan has given satisfaction wherever it has been tried. The best proof of its value is that schools that have once tried it ask for its continuance, and that the demand for apprentice teachers is larger than our supply. As further evidence of its value, there has been a rapid development of a demand for such training by students who are doing graduate work in education in the University of Pittsburgh.